

A

# REVIEW

OF THE

# STATE

OF THE

# BRITISH NATION.

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Saturday, June 2. 1711.

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**I** Endeavoured in some of these Papers lately, to prevent a new Faction Rising up among us between Trade and Land — I am sensible we have Divisions enough among us already, whether in Matters of State or Religion, and think we stand in need of no farther Assistance to our Party-making Temper.

For this Reason, having given the due Preference to Trade, as the great Foundation of *English* Wealth, and shewn the Landed Men how impossible it had been to bring their Estates up to the present Improvement but by Trade; and how impossible it would be by any other Method to

keep them up to that Value: I thought I had done Justice to the great Father of the Nation's exceeding Riches, I mean our Trade, and doubted not but I had effectually stoppt the Mouths of our modern Champions of the real Estates, who cried up Land as the Fund of the Nation's Wealth, exclusive of Trade, and indeed so I had.

After this, to let you see that really these two Sisters in the Nation's Wealth were so depending upon one another, that like the Belly and the Members they could not subsist apart. *I entered briefly* into the Advantage our Land is to Trade, and clos'd it,

it, with shewing, That neither Trade can act without Land, any more than Land can be improved without Trade, but that they both depended upon one another; and that the Nation's Wealth is equally in Debt to both; and that I might keep the Peace effectually between these two contending Parties, I endeavour'd to give either of them their due Weight, to shew how necessary they were to one another, and how incapable we were of being Rich without either of them — This I thought was the best way to keep the Peace between the Parties; for nothing tends so naturally to create mutual Affection, as a true sight of the mutual Necessity we are in of Help and Assistance from one another.

But as if I had given too great an Equality to the Wealth and Value of Land, and had not given Trade its due Preference, I find the Opinion of some Gentlemen runs so high against Land, that they will have Trade to be the only Agent of Wealth; that we owe every Beauty, every Value, every Article, either pleasant or profitable, to Trade — Depreciating the *Terra Firma* of England to that Degree, that the Soil is rendred a perfect Wilderness, without the Help of Commerce, that we have every thing from Abroad; that the Native Produce of England was of no Worth at all. — And that I may not seem to do Wrong to any Man, much less to an Author I so exceedingly esteem, I must crave the Spectator's Leave to quote from him what he is pleased to tell us, and I hope it is true, he has quoted from *Natural Historians*, and I am not to doubt but he can produce his Authors — tho' I may venture to say of those Authors, or of whosoever else joins in that Opinion; They seem to tell us, that their Excellence in the Knowledge of Commerce and Trade does not seem to be equal to the other Beauties they are to be admired for; or in short, *That the knowledge of Trade is a little out of their way.* The Words are as follows.

*If we consider our own Country in its natural Prospect, without any of the Benefits or*

*Advantage of Commerce, what a barren, uncomfortable spot of Earth falls to our share? Natural Historians tell us, that no Fruit grows originally among us, besides Hips and Haws, and Pig-Nuts, with other Delicacies of the like Nature; that the Climate of it self can make no farther advances towards a Plum than a Sloe, and carries an Apple to no greater perfection than a Crab; that these Fruits in their present State, as well as our Melons, our Figs, our Apricots and Cherries, are Strangers among us, imported in different Ages, and naturalized in our English Gardens; and that they would all degenerate, and fall away into the trash of our own Country if they were wholly neglected by the Planter, and left to the Mercy of our Sun and Soil.* Spectator, N<sup>o</sup> 69. May 19.

Now really, whoever these Natural Historians are, I should hardly have taken their Character of my Country, if I had known any thing of it my self — However, I shall make no Reflections on the Quoting these Historians, but endeavour to clear up my Country's real Worth, without giving it an imaginary one. I never cry up the Place, because I was born in it; nor am I so fond of England, above all the World.

I am none of those that think England God's Garden; to say the Creator was in the wrong to place Paradise in *Asia*, or on the Banks of *Euphrates*; that it had been better on the Banks of *Thames*. That no Place is like England; and when Adam and Eve were driven out of the Garden, if they had been Planted here, it had been no loss to them.

But on the other hand, I must not allow that it is a Barren, Uncomfortable Soil; this is so contrary to Truth and Experience, and we so daily Taste and See the contrary, that it sounds ungrateful to our Native Country to say so; and it is unaccountably surprizing to see such an Account of England from so Celebrated, a Pen, as the Spectator.

To set this Matter in a clear Light, I shall, with the Spectator's License, who would not offend, say a Word or two for the Native Productions of England, and what



what she was really capable of, supposing she had never had the Advantage of Commerce with any part of the World.

When this is done, I shall, to the best of my Skill, own all the Improvements we have enjoy'd by Trade, and acknowledge the increase of our Wealth to that increase of Trade and Credit, to which it is really due; for I will, if possibly, speak Impartially.

And now, if possible, let us form an Idea in our Minds of the Island of *Britain* before *Julius Caesar* landed in it, before it had any Commerce with the rest of the World — When its Inhabitants liv'd in Huts, went Naked, or covered with the Skins of Beasts, when Pride satisfied it self with Pinking and Painting their Flesh, instead of Cloathing it with the Silks of *Persia*, the Brocades of *Italy*, the Linnen of *Germany*, or the Callicoe of *India* — When the *Thames* supplied them with Drink instead of the *Garonne*, and they refresh'd their Spirits with a draught of the cool Spring, instead of a Dram of cool *Nectar*; when Hunger and a keen Appetite relished their Food, and serv'd, instead of the Spices, and Sauces of Foreign Countries — Their Vessels of Wood or Earth supplied the Gayety of *China* and *Japan*, and the Glasses of *Venice* — When they had neither Shipping for Foreign Trade, or Manufacture for Home Trade.

Now suppose the Land in this its Native Condition, and as no doubt it then was perfectly unimprov'd, only allow it Peopled as now, with Diligent, Skillful and Laborious Husbandmen and Labourers, though without the least Converse with the rest of the World, not a Ship coming to, or going from it — If in this Condition I make it appear, that *Britain*, for I am far from excluding *Scotland*, whose Soil is in its proportion equally Rich and Fruitful, is by Nature Rich, its Soil capable of eminent Productions, and fill'd with a vast Magazine of Kinds to produce from; if I prove it has all within it self necessary for the Use of its Inhabitants, not only for Life, but even to Luxury and Pleasure. If I prove it was originally furnish'd by Nature to be the great Store-House of the World, and

that it ever stood less in need of other Countries, than other Countries did of it. If I prove that all the Wealth and Improvement of Trade took its rise from the Native Fund of Wealth Heaven had plac'd in our Soil, without which, Commerce had serv'd only to Impoverish, not Enrich us. If all this may be made appear, without being Partial to our selves; then really the Spectator has been guilty of injuring his own Country, disowning the Creation-Blessings Heaven has bestow'd on it — and giving that Honour to foreign Nations, which Nature has by her visible Testimony claim'd for us as our Due — And if this be true, it might be no Affront to that happy Genius, who hardly ever mistook before, to entreat him to go on in his Polite Reflections and Instructive Observations on all his other Subjects, and only resolve to let Trade alone as a little too low for him.

I have not Time to say much, in this Paper, of the Soil and Native Productions of this Island; nor can I stay here to quote the Relations Historians have given of this Country: But this, in short is apparent,

1. Our Wool, the Treasure of *Britain*, the Wealth of its Inhabitants, and now become so of *Europe* — I defy all the Historians to shew me that this is not an Original of *Britain*, and a true Legitimate Child of the Island, begotten by Parent *Clime* upon Mother *Soil*. No Man can pretend to say when the Sheep were imported from other Countries; but suppose it, because the great Creation Act was not here; But I say the Wool is a Creation of *Britain*, and I prove it thus;

2. Bring Foreign Sheep hither with Wool like Dog's Hair, Naked and Coarse; I'll undertake how to make their Wool fine, the Staple large, and the Fleece heavy, and that without mixing the Breed.

2. Carry *English* Sheep abroad, and in most Countries, I think I may say all *Spain* excepted, tho' when they went away their Wool was rich, large, and fine, it shall degenerate, grow coarse, short and thin; no Soil, no Climate but this shall uphold 'em.

Either this is true or false; let Mr. Spectator examine it.



I shall examine our Horses, Beever and Hounds in like manner; all which were found her when *Julius Cæsar* came hither; and after that something of Plants; when I shall prove, That *Britain* can produce more than Hips and Haws, Acorns and Pig-Nutts, as is pretended.

I would also recommend it to the *Spectator* to ask Pardon of the Ladies, who, I believe, have reason to think themselves injured; and who are not atham'd to be re-

cknoed part of the Native Produce of our Soil and Climate, according to the old Verse on the Produce of *England*,

*Anglia Mons, Pons, Fons, Ecclesia, Fa-  
mina, Lana.*

The Gentleman who sent a Letter to the Author of this Paper, with a Prophecy Enclosed in it, sign'd *N. G.* is desired to send word where an answer may be directed to him.

## ADVERTISEMENT.

**L** EFT in a Hackney Coach, which took up two Gentlemen, *Tuesday* Night last, at the *Crown and Cushion* on *Ludgate-Hill*, a Collection of the Acts of Parliament for this Session, stich'd in several Parcels: If the Coachman, or any other Person will bring the said Books to Mr. *John Matthews*, Printer of this Paper, in *Little Britain*, they shall have Two Shillings and Six Pence Reward.

The Gentlemen were set down near *Story's Entry* into the *Park*, in *Westminster*.

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